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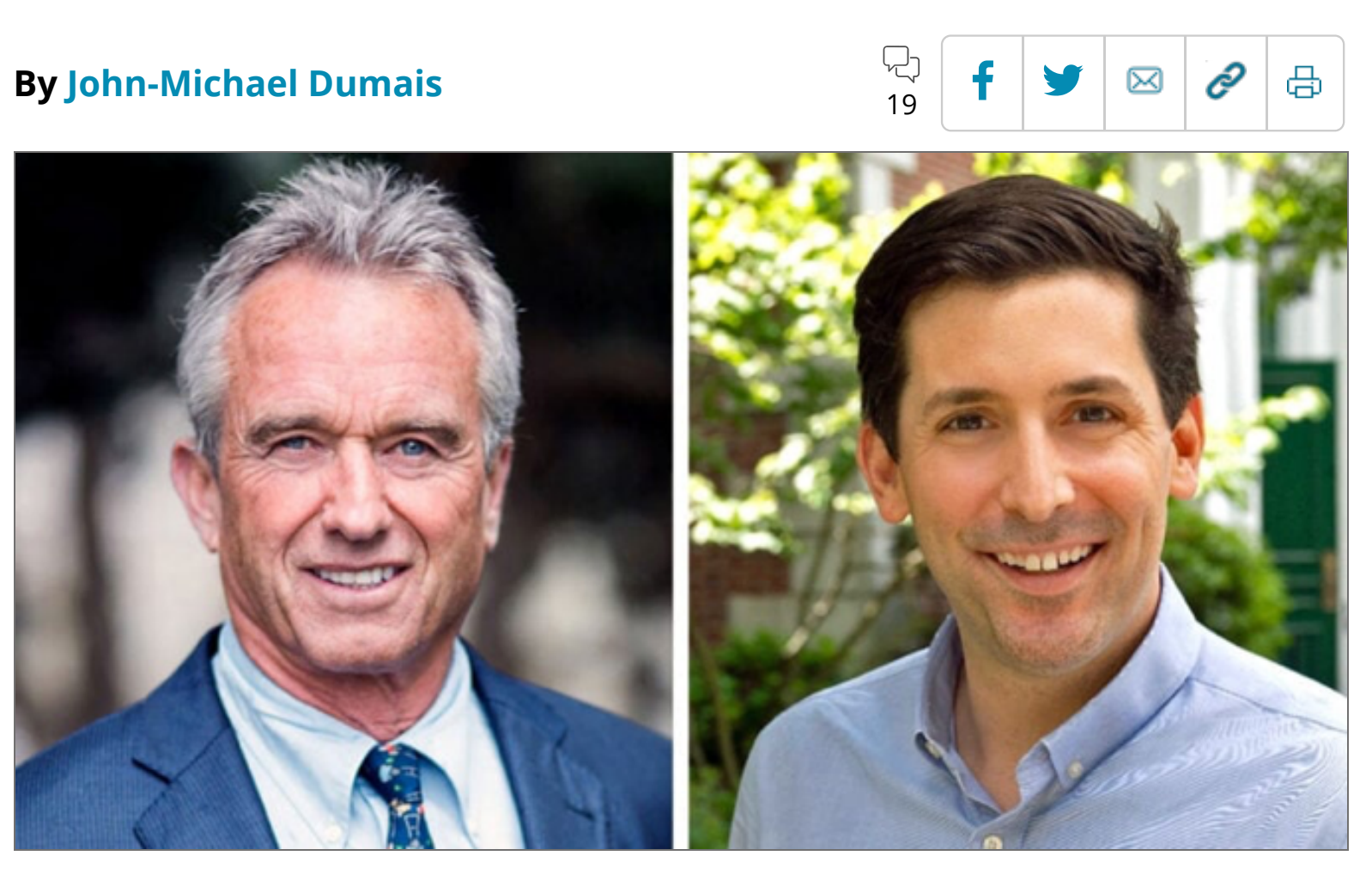
IRS Cracks Down on Deductions for Healthy Food, Exercise as Childhood Chronic Disease Epidemic Explodes

The IRS policy will make the childhood health crisis in America even worse by prioritizing pharmaceutical interventions over nutrition and wellness, according to health advocate Calley Means who appeared on the "RFK Jr Podcast."

By **John-Michael Dumais**

19



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For the first time in history, the IRS is weighing in on "the degree to which doctors should be recommending … food and exercise" to their patients, said health advocate Calley Means.

In an appearance on the "RFK Jr Podcast," Means discussed a March 6 IRS "reminder" warning that people who use health savings accounts (HSAs) and flexible spending accounts (FSAs) will no longer be able to deduct "nutrition, wellness and general health" expenses — even if a doctor provides a note recommending them — unless they are "related to a targeted diagnosis-specific activity or treatment."

Gym memberships can count as a medical expense only if recommended by a doctor for the sole purpose of treating an injury or a specific medical condition like obesity or hypertension, according to The Washington Post, which reported on the IRS alert.

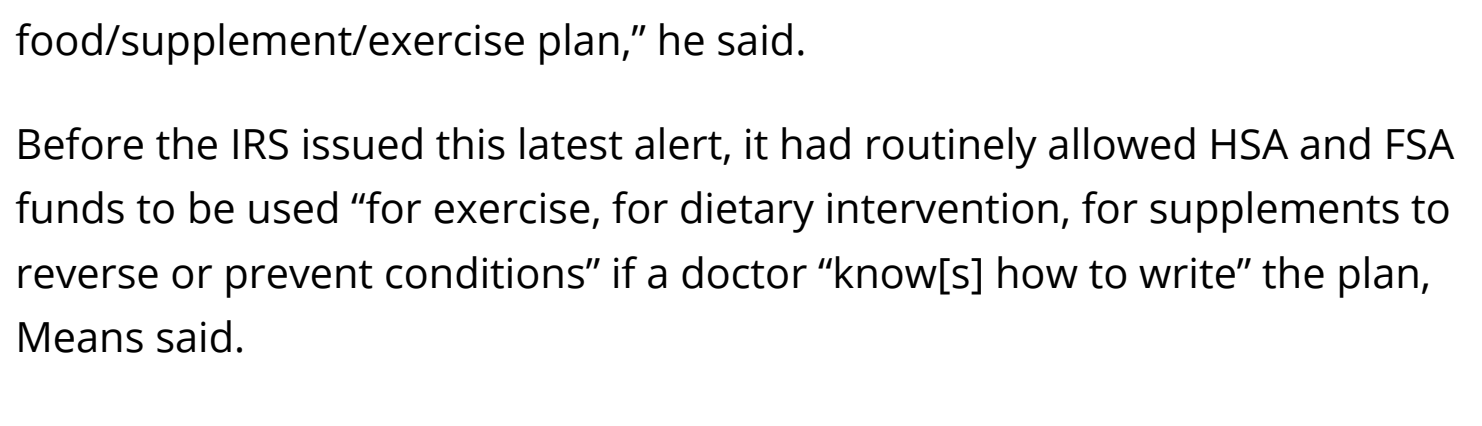
Means told Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Children's Health Defense chairman on leave, that the IRS policy would make the childhood health crisis in America even worse by prioritizing pharmaceutical interventions over nutrition and wellness.

Means, co-founder of Truemed, a company that helps people leverage tax-advantaged HSA and FSA funds for "food, exercise, or supplement interventions [that] can prevent or reverse disease," said the IRS alert sets a higher bar for using these accounts for preventive measures, such as healthy food and fitness, than it does for drugs such as Ozempic, a popular weight-loss medication.

"The IRS is literally saying it is easier and clearer and [will bring] less scrutiny … to get a prescription for Ozempic than to work with your doctor to get a detailed food/supplement/exercise plan," he said.

Before the IRS issued this latest alert, it had routinely allowed HSA and FSA funds to be used "for exercise, for dietary intervention, for supplements to reverse or prevent conditions" if a doctor "know[s] how to write" the plan, Means said.

"The law is that … if you're prediabetic, if you're dealing with heart issues … [or] obesity, you can actually get a medical letter from your doctor with a detailed dietary plan," he said.


"The Wuhan Cover-Up" by Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

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IRS favors drugs over wellness

HSAs, FSAs and similar health spending accounts allow people to set aside a portion of their income pretax to pay for an array of medical and dental expenses, including prescription drugs, vision care, doctors' expenses (including co-pays), birth control pills, fertility treatments, hearing aids, physical therapy — even acupuncture and psychiatric care.

Parents can legally use their HSA or FSA funds to help pay for healthcare for their dependent children, stepchildren or foster children through age 18 (age 23 for full-time students). Other family members may also qualify under certain conditions.

In its recent alert, however, the IRS warned, for example, that food can be considered a medical expense only if it is recommended by a physician to treat a specific illness, does not satisfy normal nutritional needs, and the cost is over and above normal food expenses.

With the IRS reportedly now targeting people who may be accessing HSA funds outside of its rules, taxpayers may be required to pay ordinary income tax on such distributions — plus a 20% penalty if under age 65 — according to Yahoo Finance. Those with FSA accounts will have to redeposit the funds they used.

Means told Kennedy that Americans have $150 billion in health-related tax-advantaged accounts, which may be why a "pharmaceutical lobbyist who was upset with what we [Truemed] were doing tipped off the IRS."

"Let's call this what it is," Means said, "an attempt by regulators to confuse and freeze the trend of Americans learning that they can work with their doctors to reverse disease with food, not drugs."

Youth diabetic, reproductive issues 'genocidal'

During the podcast, Means cited several statistics, including that 25% of young adults have fatty liver disease, 33% of teens are pre-diabetic and nearly 50% of children are overweight or obese.

"We have cancer exploding among kids," he added, also noting a recent New York Times article on plummeting fertility and birth rates worldwide.

Kennedy pointed out that chronic diseases that were rare in children when he was young — for example, autism, allergies and autoimmune disorders — have skyrocketed.

"I never saw kids with autism," he said, "and then suddenly they started appearing in the mid-1990s. … We went from 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 34."

Kennedy also noted the sudden appearance of peanut allergies and juvenile or Type 1 diabetes, which were almost unheard of in previous generations.

Means highlighted the staggering rise in childhood obesity and diabetes. "When I was a kid, a typical pediatrician might see one juvenile diabetes [case] in his career and today … 1 out of every 3 is pre-diabetic or diabetic."

The consequences of this chronic disease epidemic are "genocidal" in Means' view. With a generation of young people "who are going to be diabetic and, frankly, infertile, our literal reproductive systems are shutting down," he said.

"This is the biggest issue in the country," he said, calling it "existential."

"It's also an economic catastrophe," Means said, because the current incentives "just explode costs with the healthcare system."

Kennedy agreed. "It's costing us $4.3 trillion a year. … That's bankrupting us. We're destroying our country. When my uncle was president, 6% of the GDP [gross domestic product] went to healthcare," he said. "Today it's 22%."

'First line of defense for chronic conditions for kids is a prescription pad'

Means and Kennedy attributed the childhood epidemic of chronic disease to a healthcare system that profits from chronic disease.

They said the food and pharmaceutical industries have corrupted medical institutions, federal agencies and even social justice organizations to keep Americans, especially those in lower income brackets, dependent on their products.

"Plainly, pharma and the healthcare industry is the top funder of politicians, the top funder of the media, the top funder of med schools, the top funder of research, the top funder of civil rights groups — the top funder of every single group that we trust," Means said.

Means provided examples of industry influence on trusted medical organizations.

Recalling his early career as a consultant for the food and pharma industries, he said "The American Academy of Pediatrics actually did partnerships with Coke [Coca-Cola]."

He also mentioned that the American Diabetes Association took millions of dollars from Coca-Cola, despite the role of sugary drinks in driving diabetes rates.

These groups, Means argued, "are nothing more than public relations entities" for the pharmaceutical industry, yet they have "quasi-governmental authority to make the standard of care" for doctors.

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"That is why the first line of defense for chronic conditions for kids is a prescription pad," he said.

Means also recounted how the American Beverages Association and soda companies paid the NAACP millions of dollars to say, "They're taking away a Coke from poor kids." The NAACP and their allies "went out and said it was racist to take away Coke from kids," he said.

Means also criticized the training doctors receive, suggesting it fails to address the root causes of health issues and instead focuses on "pharmacology [but] not a single class on nutrition."

Means said his sister Dr. Casey Means, a graduate of Stanford Medical School, "did not learn in 11 years … what causes inflammation." Doctors, he said, are taught that "their only job is to stand ready with the scalpel and the prescription pad when these lazy American patients come to them."

"The best possible thing economically for the pharmaceutical industry is for a kid to get metabolically unhealthy early because then you've got them," he said.

"The American people are not trying to be sicker, fatter or more depressed [or] more infertile," Means told Kennedy. "We're pushing trillions of dollars of incentives for kids to eat poisonous food, eventually get sick, and then get on a pharmaceutical treadmill."

Means said that even health insurance companies make more money from chronically ill policyholders because the increased demand means they can raise premiums.

The Defender contacted the press offices of the Biden administration and the Trump campaign for comment on the IRS alert but received no responses by the time this article was published.

Listen to the 'RFK Jr Podcast' with Calley Means on Spotify:

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The Defender on occasion posts content related to Children's Health Defense's nonprofit mission that features Mr. Kennedy's views on the issues CHD and The Defender regularly cover. In keeping with Federal Election Commission rules, this content does not represent an endorsement of Mr. Kennedy, who is on leave from CHD and is running as an independent for president of the U.S.

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SUGGEST A CORRECTION

John-Michael Dumais
John-Michael Dumais is a news editor for The Defender. He has been a writer and community organizer on a variety of issues, including the death penalty, war, health freedom and all things related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Beatrice
a month ago edited

Unfortunately, regulating foods and nutraceuticals as medicines is a very dangerous slippery slope. Years ago when I began using Functional /Preventive medicine, my doctor would send me home with a list of supplements to purchase with instructions. He would also send me home with healthy recipes. One day I asked my doctor why doctors don't prescribe supplements and healthy foods and he explained DSHEA and why it was important NOT to regulate them as medicines. If you're not familiar with DSHEA, please look it up because it really is important in order to protect your rights to purchase supplements and healthy foods.

Big Pharma wants to ban ALL supplements and has plans in the works to do that very thing. They've tried this before which is why and how DSHEA was passed. The industry is realizing that more and more people are leaving conventional allopathic medicine and choosing a more holistic and complimentary model for their healthcare. Especially after the plandemic debacle, more people distrust doctors and healthcare in the US and are turning to natural medicines like whole food supplements, herbal tinctures, acupuncture and healthy whole foods. Big Pharma isn't happy about this and so they want us to pay to get prescriptions for our vitamin C, E, D, etc....But how can they regulate vitamins as foods? Think about this...they will have to regulate how many oranges you consume in a day or how many

see more

15 0 Reply

Jennifo → Beatrice
a month ago

I have more knowledge than my nurse daughter. She refuses to acknowledge my personal experience of multiple food sensitivities & being GF DF as my way of life. My grandkids now have allergies themselves but eat a brown diet & they are ill fairly often. It saddens me a lot.

4 0 Reply

Beatrice → Jennifo
a month ago

That's too bad. Unfortunately, she chooses to be ignorant for some reason. Maybe she's just too afraid that the truth will cause her to hate her job and feel like she's betraying patients. Who knows why anyone avoids the truth?

3 0 Reply

Isthisthingon → Beatrice
a month ago

Mass Formation/Stockholm Syndrome!

Daddy Government and Mommy Medicine! Which has our Birth-Life-Death all wrapped up in the Pyramid Ponzi Scheme!

People seem Grown, but really most feel like Imposters-per the Con, as you know. Today though, with technology and indoctrination, addictions to everything harmful, etc. most having the attention span of a Goldfish, wow, just wow, it is hard to be hopeful....

It is super hard to take the Road Less Traveled!

I was thinking about he label Adult. How my son is grappling with the reality that he isn't prepared as of yet to handle all the responsibilities and that his BRAIN is still developing, etc. but the expectation for diving right in, head first, jumping on the Hamster Wheel is the Norm. This is all by design of course, to get these young people to make bad decisions signing

see more

2 0 Reply

Beatrice → Isthisthingon
a month ago

You're right. We've been abused by our government and capitalism our entire lives and until a person realizes their own self worth, they won't recognize the abuse! We are no longer citizens but consumers. We are objects in servitude to our corporate owned government. When any of us fully realizes how truly pathological this relationship is, we will then see how it has affected our relationship with ourselves, our family, community and country. We will understand why so many feel that G-d doesn't exist. We will understand why so many feel the need to numb their feelings with poisonous medications and substances. We will understand the need to dehumanize each other as sexual objects and brands. We will understand the epidemic of child abuse and malignant narcissism. We will understand the prevalent and persistent anger in each other. It doesn't feel good to be used and abused. I see a country of desperate people who are full of shame and feel powerless as productive citizens with meaning and purpose.

1 0 Reply

Isthisthingon → Beatrice
a month ago

Drop the Mic!

2 0 Reply

Beatrice → Isthisthingon
a month ago

LOL! When people are ignored, they speak louder!

If you are considering starting a business, scour ever tax law, regulation, etc.. Let me tell you, they are doing everything they can now to shut down small business. They are desperate. Sadly, your safest business is creating a hedge fund. YUK

1 0 Reply

Crazy 4 Color
a month ago

The medical industrial complex has become a mafia

9 0 Reply

1555 → Crazy 4 Color
a month ago

It has been working on it for over 100 years, wants to own the entire health world. Don't let them!

2 0 Reply

Ricky Ricardo → Crazy 4 Color
a month ago

Actually; they're not...the mafia has honour and loyalty.

1 0 Reply

BarbaraCharis
a month ago

If our government cared about Americans:
It would pay scientists to do legitimate research to find answers;:
It would not permit industries to do their own product research
It would supervise agencies to make sure they did their specified work. .
The USDA would be into knowledable soil conservation; all harmful methods banned.
The FDA would not permit harmful drugs or food to be marketed.
It would have been wonderful if our government really cared!

7 0 Reply

boxerdoglover → BarbaraCharis
a month ago

You mean they wouldn't kill the ones who found cancer cures…

2 0 Reply

Bry
a month ago

Our country is fueled by chronic disease

4 0 Reply

Double_Up
a month ago

If you can't get your vitamins and minerals from your food, you need supplements, just the right ones.

4 0 Reply

Little O
a month ago

CHD and the Defender are still stuck in the corrupt medical playing-field and how to change it. This article is like telling a person on the Titanic after it struck the iceberg about all the problems in the design of the ship, errors made by the Captain and the crew, errors in the weather reports, how its replacement ship should be built and operated, etc. STOP IT.... GET OFF THE "SHIP" and into the lifeboat.

Mr. Dumais, since you are a community organizer, organize your community to change JUST ONE THING. Get them to watch a few youtubes of Dr. Satchin Panda, of the Salk Institute, talking in interviews about the horrible consequences of "eating after sundown." 7 years ago, when asked a hypothetical by another microbiologist scientist, said these words: "Sadly, it is BETTER to eat an UNHEALTHY meal during the day because eating later in the evening turns even NUTRITIOUS food into junk." He explained that "junk" meant inflammation being caused throughout the blood stream and surrounding tissue ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT.

Reflect on that AND the scientific fact that "Inflammation is at the root - cause and/or effect of all illness." How effective is this "Never eat after sundown" rule. A 20 year Type II insulin taking diabetic (73 year old man) saw an unprecedented consistent decline in his AM

see more

3 0 Reply

Rob DF
a month ago

How about we start working to get the IRS/government out of the economy with all the insane distortions they create. I have an HSA and I think it's an incredibly unjust setup. Essentially if you earn enough to afford an HSA you pay less taxes and have more choices. If you can't afford it you're stuck with substandard everything. How about just eliminating HSAs altogether, lowering the tax rate for everyone by a corresponding amount and let everyone buy what they want. Not going to happen of course.

3 0 Reply

Ricky Ricardo
a month ago

Screw the psychopathic Luciferians. They are certainly screwing us! "1984" is going to look normal, compared to what's coming!

1 0 Reply

GRgal
a month ago

IRS is run by brigands and thieves I think.

1 0 Reply

Peter van der Stam
a month ago

The gynocologist of my wife told her: (in 1974) if you are not having more radiation and Gemmo, I give you only 5 years to live.
She went 100% Homeopathic and healthy vegetables etc, and lived another 45 years.
Is it a wonder that I believe in Homeopathy and acupuncture??

0 0 Reply

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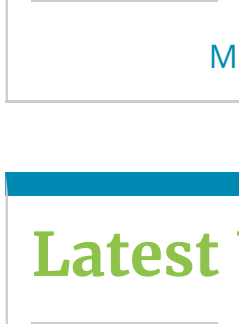
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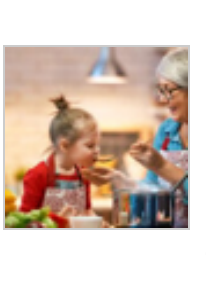
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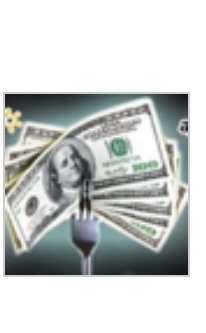
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